

## Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

SAM-01 OMB-01 SAB-01 ACDA-10 CU-04 SSO-00 INRE-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 /092 W

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O R 211535Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9388

INFO DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE/ECJ2

AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USUN

UNCLAS CAIRO 0816

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR EG LE

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN PRESS COVERAGE OF LEBANESE CRISIS

REF: CAIRO 0724 201150 JANUARY 76

1. LOCAL PRESS JANUARY 21 AGAIN DOMINATED BY COVERAGE OF LEBANESE SITUATION; SEVERAL ELEMENTS ARE HIGHLIGHTED.

A. ARAB LEAGUE SYG RIAD INITIATIVE: ALL PAPERS DEVOTE EXTENSIVE COVERAGE TO EFFORTS OF AL SYG MAHMUD RIAD TO CONVENE URGENT ARAB SUMMIT ON LEBANON UNDER ARAB LEAGUE AUSPICES. ARTICLES STATE RIAD HELD MEETING JANUARY 20 WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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AL PERMREPS (WITHOUT SYRIAN PARTICIPATION), AFTER WHICH HE

ANNOUNCED INVITATIONS TO SUMMIT. (RIAD APPARENTLY CONCLUDED HE HAD AUTHORITY TO CONVENE SUCH SUMMIT WITHOUT ADVANCE APPROVAL OF MEMBER STATES.) FIRST EDITION OF GUMHURIYYA CLAIMED RIAD HOPED HOLD SUCH MEETING "WITHIN FOUR DAYS," ALTHOUGH TIMING DROPPED IN LATER EDITIONS. RELIABLE WESTERN JOURNALISTS INFORMED US THAT, IN FACT, RIAD SAID HE HOPED TO CONVENE SUMMIT BEFORE END OF JANUARY.

B. GOE REACTION: QUOTE OFFICIAL UNQUOTE, BUT UNATTRIBUTED EGYPTIAN RESPONSE TO RIAD INVITATION THROWS COLD WATER ON RIAD'S INITIATIVE. PAPERS REPORT THAT GOE STATEMENT DECLARED THAT, ALTHOUGH EGYPT NOT OPPOSED TO IDEA OF SUMMIT, AL SYG HAD BETTER FIRST GO TO LEBANON AND MEET WITH ALL PARTIES CONCERNED BEFORE URGING SUMMIT MEETING. SHOULD LEBANESE AGREE TO AL DISCUSSIONS OF LEBANESE SITUATION, THEN, AFTER RIAD'S CONSULTATIONS, FORM AND DATE OF SUMMIT CONFERENCE MIGHT BE DISCUSSED.

C. SHAM'UN'S STATEMENT: MAIN EMPHASIS IN PRESS REPORTAGE IS CALL BY LEBANON MININT SHAM'UN FOR UN, WESTERN EUROPEAN OR US INTERVENTION IN CRISIS GIVEN ALLEGED FLAGRANT SYRIAN VIOLATION OF LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY. SHAM'UN'S CALL PROVOKED STRONGLY NEGATIVE EDITORIAL REACTION. BOTH AHRAH AND AKHBAR CARRY EDITORIALS CONDEMNING CALLS FOR "INTERNATIONALIZATION" OF LEBANESE CRISIS AND CALLING FOR RESPONSE AT ARAB LEVEL WHICH WOULD PREVENT ISRAEL FROM INTERVENING AND "DEVOURING WHAT SHE CAN" OF SOUTHERN LEBANON.

D. SYRIA: ALL PAPERS CARRY, WITHOUT COMMENT, SYRIAN DENIAL THAT SYRIAN ARMY INVOLVED. CONSPICUOUS BY ITS ABSENCE IS ANY EGYPTIAN COMMENTARY ON SYRIAN PLA INTERVENTION.

E. GHORRA: PAPERS ALSO REPORT LEBNAESE UN PERMREP GHORRA'S STATEMENT THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN OFFICIALLY ASKED BY GOL TO RAISE LEBNESE CRISIS IN UNSC. PAPERS MAKE POINT THAT UN INVOLVEMENT WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO ARAB STATES, IN PART BECAUSE THIS PROPOSED BY LEADING LEBANESE CHRISTIAN SPOKESMAN.

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F. US POSITION: QUOTING " OFFICIAL SOURCES", PRESS REPORTS PRESIDENT FORD IS FOLLOWING LEBANESE SITUATION WITH GREAT CONCERN; ALTHOUGH USG HAS NO PLANS TO INTERVENE IN ANY MANNER IN CIRIS.

G. ISRAEL: DAILIES GENERALLY DOWNPLAY ALL PUBLIC STATEMENTS FROM ISRAEL CONCERNING POSSIBILITIES OF

ISRAELI INTERVENTION IN LEBANESE CRISIS IN RESPONSE TO SYRIAN MANEUVERS. AKHBAR CARRIES AFP ITEM FROM JERUSALEM STATING THAT PRIMIN RABIN MAY DELAY US TRIP DUE TO DETERIORATING LEBANESE SITUATION. GUMHURIYYA MERELY CARRIES FRONT-PAGE SQUIB IN WHICH ISRAELI SPOKESMAN WARNS THAT INTERVENTION BY SYRIAN ARMY IN LEBANON WILL CAUSE ISRAEL TO TAKE APPROPRIATE DEFENSIVE MEASURES. NO OTHER ARTICLES CONCERNING ISRAELI PERCEPTIONS OF CURRENT CRISIS ARE CARRIED.

2. ALL PAPERS REPORT ALLEGED CHRISTIAN ATROCITIES IN KARANTINA SECTION OF BEIRUT, FALL OF DAMUR TO MUSLIMS-PALESTINIANS AND ALSO LEBANESE STUDENT OCCUPATION OF LEBANESE CONGEN IN ALEXANDRIA.

3. AS THIS MESSAGE BEING WRITTEN, ARAB STUDENTS ARE DEMONSTRATING IN AL HEADQUARTERS. ACCORDING TO CAIRO RADIO, DEMONSTRATORS ARE FROM PAN ARAB STUDENT UNION ORGANIZATION. LEADERS HAVE REPORTEDLY GIVEN SYG RIAD PETITION DEMANDING "FULL SUPPORT FOR LEBANON ON ALL LEVELS", AN END TO CARNAGE, AND DEMANDING AL TAKE FIRM STAND AGAINST ANY EFFORT PARTITION LEBANON. ARAB LEAGUE MUST RESOLUTELY CONFRONT FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND SAFEGUARD LEBANON'S ARABISM, ITS TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AND THE SANCTITY OF PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION. EILTS

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